

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for providing an extensible software architecture that facilitates providing additional end-user system functionality educational system, the method comprising the steps of:

installing on a system server a file compatible with a known system application program interface (API), wherein the installed file utilizes the known API to provide a modified user interface to one or more users at least one user of the system;

invoking an enhanced system functionality by using the modified user interface;

specifying in the file one or more roles of a user that can utilize the enhanced system functionality;

determining if the user has rights to utilize the enhanced system functionality based on the role of the user; and

if the user has rights, granting access to the user to utilize the enhanced system functionality.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of writing storing the one or more roles into a system data repository.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the enhanced system functionality is provided by at least one of a hyperlink and an icon.

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the one or more roles comprise at least one of: user administrator, course administrator, system support, observer,

support, portal administrator, system administrator, instructor, student and teacher's assistant.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of denying access to the enhanced system functionality if the user does not have access rights.

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the file is installed on the system server by using a Java archive file.

7. (New) An extensible educational system comprising:

a user interface;

a plug-in manager configured to add new functionality to the extensible education system; and

an authentication user interface configured to verify a role of a user in the extensible educational system, and grant or deny a user access to the new functionality based on the role of the user in the extensible educational system, wherein the role of a user comprises at least one of: user administrator, course administrator, system support, observer, support, portal administrator, system administrator, instructor, student and teacher's assistant.

8. (New) The system of claim 7, wherein the plug-in manager and the authentication user interface are invoked using the user interface.

9. (New) A method for providing an extensible educational system, the method comprising:
displaying a user interface;

invoking a plug-in manager configured to add new functionality to the extensible education system; and

invoking an authentication user interface configured to verify a role of a user in the extensible educational system, and grant or deny a user access to the new functionality based on the role of the user in the extensible educational system.

10. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein the role of a user comprises at least one of: user administrator, course administrator, system support, observer, support, portal administrator, system administrator, instructor, student and teacher's assistant.

11. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein the plug-in manager and the authentication user interface are invoked using the user interface.

12. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein the user interface is displayed by installing one or more files on a server.

13. (New) A computer readable medium, which when executed on a computer performs a method for providing an extensible educational system, the method comprising:

displaying a user interface;

invoking a plug-in manager configured to add new functionality to the extensible education system; and

invoking an authentication user interface configured to verify a role of a user in the extensible educational system, and grant or deny a user access to the new functionality based on

the role of the user in the extensible educational system.

14. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 13, wherein the role of a user comprises at least one of: user administrator, course administrator, system support, observer, support, portal administrator, system administrator, instructor, student and teacher's assistant.

15. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 13, wherein the plug-in manager and the authentication user interface are invoked using the user interface.

16. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 13, wherein the user interface is displayed by installing one or more files on a server.